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Chairman: Mr. Loedel ..... (Uruguay)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 85: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (*continued*)

1. **Ms. Ognjanovac** (Croatia) said that, as a former recipient of peacekeeping missions, Croatia was proud to have become one of the contributing States to United Nations peacekeeping efforts. Her Government welcomed the growing capacity for rapid deployment of both funds and strategic stocks, but noted that many troop-contributing countries, including her own, still experienced technical difficulties in meeting rapid deployment requirements because of the complexity of internal decision-making procedures. However, the relevant authorities of Croatia were studying possible courses of action.

2. In developing and implementing comprehensive strategies for complex peacekeeping missions, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had received significant help from the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Task Force on rule of law strategies in peacekeeping operations. With stronger cooperation among the major United Nations organs, especially the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and with better use of existing expertise within the United Nations system, much of the burden could be lifted from peacekeepers.

3. Improved training was needed to prepare peacekeepers for the complexity of current operations. The Department was making a necessary effort to coordinate the training provided by the various Member States — through the Standardized Generic Training Modules project, the production of new training materials, the provision of broad-based guidance to national and regional peacekeeping training centres, and the recent organization of pre-deployment training sessions. Croatia looked forward to further improving its training programmes and capabilities.

4. The safety and security of unarmed civilian personnel deployed in peacekeeping operations had to be one of the highest priorities. Given the current security environment, serious consideration must be given to the need for robust peacekeeping.

5. Croatia was currently participating in six peacekeeping missions, and hoped to expand its participation in line with its capabilities in terms of both the kinds of troops deployed and the theatres of operation. In the past year, a national security strategy and a legal framework had been enacted to govern Croatia's participation in peacekeeping missions, with the widest possible range of personnel of both genders from all components of Croatia's public sector.

6. As peacekeeping operations became more complex, not just building peace but rebuilding shattered societies and State institutions, the United Nations had to adjust to the new circumstances and strive for even greater efficiency.

7. **Ms. Bahemuka** (Kenya) said that universality and impartiality should remain the cornerstone of United Nations peacekeeping operations, regardless of their geographical location. The success of the missions in Sierra Leone, Kosovo and Prevlaka was encouraging, and timely intervention, similar to that in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, was needed in other conflict areas. Multilateralism provided the best hope in resolving the conflicts and escalating threats currently facing the world.

8. There had been a welcome improvement in reimbursement of troop-contributing countries. Kenya's own extensive involvement in United Nations operations was a sign of its deep commitment. The triangular relationship between the Secretariat, the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries, should be strengthened; in that context, the implementation of the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations was particularly important. Her Government looked forward to an operational United Nations Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS) and an improved rapid deployment capacity. The draft strategic manual on multidimensional peacekeeping operations would, when completed, be a blueprint for the doctrinal, operational and practical aspects of peacekeeping.

9. Kenya believed that regional organizations, which were best placed to understand the complexities of conflicts in their areas, had a crucial role to play in resolving them. Accordingly, it welcomed the efforts made by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the new initiatives taken by the African Union and the Group of Eight. Immediate support was required in order to set up multinational brigades organized along subregional lines to enable timely responses to crises. African countries in

particular needed to have better trained and better equipped personnel. Kenya would welcome assistance to the existing and emerging troop-contributing countries, as well as the use of strategic deployment stocks to offset equipment shortfalls.

10. The targeting of United Nations personnel and installations by warring parties was an alarming development. Without enhanced protection and adequate legal regimes, United Nations personnel were easy targets. The usefulness of unarmed military observers had to be reassessed against the current realities, when peacekeeping forces were often involved in intra-State conflicts.

11. **Mr. Gallegos** (Ecuador) observed that the Organization, committed above all to stable world peace, had from the start played a major role in dispute settlement and, failing that, had established peacekeeping operations to defuse conflicts. Ecuador itself had always based its foreign policy on a respect for territorial integrity, self-determination, and peaceful coexistence among nations, and had always supported United Nations and regional efforts to those ends. He was pleased to report that Ecuador would begin contributing troops to peacekeeping operations, starting with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and urged all Member States to provide peacekeeping contingents.

12. Different standards and different levels of development militated against peace; dialogue and negotiation were the best tools for solving any dispute, and progress would be possible if the legitimate interests of each nation were respected and accompanied by an equitable distribution of world wealth, fair trade, adequate transfer of technology and full observance of human rights.

13. **Mr. Al-Sharafi** (Yemen) commended the reports of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping activities, and took note of his review of the shortcomings of certain peacekeeping operations. Among the issues referred to by the Secretary-General had been the efforts to encourage non-participating States to take part in order to give peacekeeping operations a truly international character.

14. His country was aware of the importance of participating in peacekeeping operations and had accordingly trained peacekeeping units to be ready for service with the United Nations. As a peace-loving country, Yemen reaffirmed its readiness to play its part with other nations in the business of ensuring international peace and security.

15. **Mr. Mutisi** (Zimbabwe) said that a major concern of his delegation was the question of the privileges and immunities of peacekeepers serving abroad on missions, the legal basis of which lay in Articles 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations. The legal status of civilian police and military observers fell under article VI of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, while the legal status of military members remained under the exclusive criminal jurisdiction of their own national authorities, making them immune from any criminal proceedings in the host country. Zimbabwe believed that that disparity in status was an awkward and unfair arrangement, and that consideration should be given to equating civilian police and military observers with military members. Also, the role of the troop-contributing countries in protecting the privileges and immunities of their personnel should be more clearly defined, and they should be made aware of the legal status of their personnel, as should the peacekeeping forces themselves.

16. His delegation attached great importance to enhancing African peacekeeping capacity and welcomed the efforts to establish an African standby force while maintaining the focus on Africa's greatest need, which was logistical assistance. His delegation believed that the principle of neutrality of peacekeepers and peacekeeping operations must always be upheld against potential misuse by countries pursuing their own selfish interests. In conclusion, he said that Zimbabwe was contributing to three peacekeeping operations and would soon be contributing to UNMIL as well.

17. **Mr. Ononye** (Nigeria) said that Nigeria had been a major troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations for over four decades. Consequently, peacekeeping and peacemaking were a prominent foreign policy objective. Nigeria had played a significant role at the regional and subregional level, particularly in the past decade. The huge human, material and financial sacrifices it had made in the maintenance of peace demonstrated its commitment.

18. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations had made significant progress in instituting the recommended reforms, having notably improved its ability to manage complex peacekeeping operations.

Nigeria welcomed the Department's various initiatives in such areas as lessons learned, gender mainstreaming, discipline criteria, rapid deployment, improved reimbursement, training, logistics and the rule of law, and appreciated the enhanced consultation with troop-contributing countries. The course organized by the Department for staff of permanent missions dealing with peacekeeping operations should be institutionalized, especially in the developing countries.

19. Nigeria supported the Security Council's plan for withdrawal from Sierra Leone but believed that it should be implemented cautiously in order to safeguard the country's security. Member States should help with the continuing integration of former combatants and with the training of the country's police and army. His Government welcomed the establishment of a government of national unity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but noted with dismay that very few combatants had registered for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, owing to continuing violence and obstruction by some leaders of armed groups. All parties must cooperate with the peacekeeping mission and facilitate the expansion of its mandate. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had worked together effectively to stabilize the situation in Liberia and all States should support UNMIL in order to foster national reconciliation among the various factions and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country.

20. On the issue of rapid deployment and the Department's difficulty in recruiting qualified civilians, his delegation urged the Department to use those already listed in its roster, without insisting on accepting only experienced persons. The composition of peacekeeping forces should reflect the global geographical representation of the United Nations, regardless of the region in which a mission was operating.

21. There was much benefit to be derived from cooperation between the United Nations and regional or subregional organizations in maintaining peace, and the Department's increased cooperation with the African Union and ECOWAS, especially in terms of logistical support and vocational training programmes for demobilized combatants, was to be welcomed; his delegation believed, however, that the Department should play a greater role in the training of peacekeeping troops and in increasing the use of contingent-owned equipment. The deplorable attack on the United Nations mission in Baghdad showed the need for improved overseas arrangements.

22. **Mr. Heng** (Singapore), recalling that Singapore had been contributing to United Nations peacekeeping for more than a decade, welcomed the progress made towards revitalizing and increasing the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations even while demands were increasing. In order to further strengthen the Organization's peacekeeping capacity, his delegation supported maintaining and refocusing the six priority areas for 2003 and the five priority areas suggested for 2004. Those priorities reflected three important, interrelated themes: robust peacekeeping; integration in peacekeeping; and safety and security of peacekeepers.

23. Robust peacekeeping required rapid deployment of a well-trained and fully equipped force, strong enough to be a credible deterrent and to defend itself and fulfil its mandate. Efforts to improve the Organization's rapid deployment capability and enhance training must therefore continue. Great strides had already been made in rapid deployment with regard to personnel, materiel and finances; systems had been put in place and tested, and shortfalls were being addressed. "Just-in-time" training and other training initiatives were also welcome developments.

24. On the related issue of the commitment gap, his delegation reiterated that, in order to ensure collective responsibility as well as robustness, the developed countries and their regional agreements must contribute troops, particularly since they often had the critical resources necessary for establishing a credible deterrent in a more demanding operational environment. While cooperation between the United Nations, regional organizations and African peacekeeping capacities was being strengthened, the conduct of peacekeeping operations should not be left entirely to regional organizations or countries. The model of the International Force, East Timor — United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, where troops from both developed and developing countries had stayed on during the peacekeeping mission and ensured its robustness, provided a useful starting point.

25. The complexity and multidimensional nature of peacekeeping operations made integration imperative in areas such as mission planning, training, information

and the rule of law. He welcomed the development by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of a coordinated, coherent and integrated training strategy as exemplified by the integrated mission training cell and budget for UNMIL, and hoped that integrated training would improve interoperability among units and troops. With respect to field information, he noted that the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor had established a joint information centre comprising both military and civilian police personnel, with a direct link to the political affairs section, which had significantly improved information and threat analysis. The Department should implement that model in other peacekeeping missions in order to increase robustness and enhance safety and security.

26. Ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers was critical for morale and the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions as well as for the Organization's credibility. The despicable attack on United Nations headquarters in Baghdad had highlighted the need to adopt all necessary measures to protect peacekeepers; his delegation was encouraged by the Secretariat's efforts to investigate that bombing and review the United Nations security management system.

27. **Mr. Beyendeza** (Uganda) acknowledged the multidimensional character of peacekeeping operations and welcomed the progress made on the six priorities identified for 2003 and beyond. It was clear that the Department and other stakeholders were learning from the lessons in the field and were determined to continue the transformation beyond peacekeeping in order to have a more positive impact on the lives of the individuals and countries they served.

28. His delegation stressed the need to ensure the security and safety of unarmed civilian personnel deployed in the field because lack of security for them meant that there was a lack of security for the unarmed civilian populations where peacekeeping operations were taking place. Peacekeeping missions should have a strong mandate and a robust presence and should contribute to capacity-building and institution-building in order to ensure the rule of law and promote the stability required in post-conflict peace-building. Successful peacekeeping missions had been those where there had been no delay in taking action, where adequate resources had been provided, on time, and where there had been a strong, clear and robust mandate.

29. Noting that the African continent had the largest number of peacekeeping missions and of refugees, he highlighted the urgent need to build African peacekeeping capability. Africa was willing to play its part and help manage conflicts but was faced with limitations which prevented it from handling those challenges effectively. Support from the international community had been inadequate; African nations must be supported and their institutions must be nurtured in order to help them realize their goals for peace, address the root causes of conflict and promote durable peace and sustainable development.

30. **Mr. Zhang** Yishan (China) said the positive results of recent peacekeeping operations had demonstrated the important role United Nations peacekeeping operations played as an instrument for the promotion of international peace and security. Efforts to further strengthen the Organization's peacekeeping capacity and the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations must continue.

31. Given the growing complexity of operations, traditional operations were no longer suited for certain types of conflict; the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Liberia, for example, had highlighted the need for rapid, early and robust intervention. The existing foundation for peacekeeping operations must therefore be further developed to strengthen operational mechanisms, ensure an adequate supply of troops and improve logistics, training and command. Security Council mandates must be unambiguous, clear and achievable and every effort should be made to take full advantage of existing peacekeeping consultation mechanisms in order to increase coordination between troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat and to listen to the views of the parties concerned. All Member States had an obligation to actively support peacekeeping policies and ensure adequate funding and staffing of operations.

32. The United Nations must increase its coordination and cooperation with regional organizations with a view to increasing the latter's peacekeeping capability. Regional groups, for example in Africa, had undertaken peacekeeping operations with relatively good results but their ability to implement their mandates was affected by their limited capacity and by lack of external support. The United Nations and countries with highly developed capacities must provide further assistance to the African Union and other regional bodies for development of

mechanisms, information exchange, funding, training and early-warning and peacekeeping capacity.

33. Peacekeeping operations must fully reflect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, respect the views of the parties concerned, be neutral in nature and use force only when necessary. His delegation supported the revision of peacekeeping mandates to take into account specific situations, including the use of enforcement measures where necessary, but stressed that any decision in that regard must be based solely on the facts. Observance of those principles would ensure that peacekeeping operations contributed to lasting stability and peace in the regions concerned.

34. His Government had decided to contribute non-combatant units to UNSAS and, for example, had sent a company of engineers and a medical detachment to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It was currently considering the possibility of participating in UNMIL. His delegation would continue to support peacekeeping operations and to work with all parties to ensure their effectiveness.

35. **Mr. Baatar** (Mongolia) said that events of the past year had proved the validity of the six priority areas of attention identified by the Secretary-General. The United Nations had helped keep peacekeeping processes on track by organizing and monitoring elections, assisting in the repatriation and reintegration of refugees and rehabilitating war-torn economies. At the same time, the need for a closer partnership between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries was obvious, and his delegation looked forward to recommendations in that regard of the high-level panel of eminent personalities to be established by the President of the General Assembly. The attack on the United Nations mission in Baghdad demonstrated the urgency of enhancing the safety and security of all United Nations personnel.

36. Experience had shown that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration were the most important elements of any successful transition from civil war to peace and stability. Furthermore, the incorporation of rule of law elements in mission mandates was crucial to the establishment of new and durable State structures. The fragile nature of post-conflict environments had repeatedly proven to be a challenge. A comprehensive, long-term approach was required.

37. It was considered one of the main duties of the Mongolian Armed Forces to participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Mongolia stood ready to participate in such operations or in coalition operations authorized by the Security Council. The Training and Evaluation Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had provided invaluable assistance in that regard.

38. **Mr. Stritt** (Switzerland) expressed support for United Nations peacekeeping operations as well as for peacekeeping operations undertaken by regional organizations pending deployment of a United Nations force. With regard to the latter, he stressed the need for a smooth transition and for a United Nations force sufficiently robust to fulfil its mandate.

39. His Government's priorities were reflected in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/57/767). In that context, his delegation recalled the obligation of all Member States to observe the provisions of the Charter relating to the primary responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace and security. It welcomed the decision by the Security Council to discuss the issue of justice and the rule of law and looked forward to the report and recommendations of the Secretary-General in that regard. In order to strengthen cooperation between the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat, troop-contributing countries' meetings must be announced well in advance so as to permit adequate preparation and exchange of operational experience.

40. In order to ensure the security of personnel, military operations and security procedures should not be influenced by political considerations and the military and civilian components of missions should operate in a coordinated and complementary manner. Information must be shared openly, especially in the face of new developments; his Government strongly supported the Special Committee's recommendation that all troop contributors should be informed of the results of investigations of accidents and any action subsequently taken. The Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit should play an important role in applying lessons learned to current and future missions. His delegation supported the recommendation that civilian police and experts should have appropriate immunity when engaged in sensitive tasks.

41. The behaviour of mission personnel must be above reproach. His delegation supported the Department's efforts to prevent misconduct on the part of mission personnel and stressed the need for them to observe scrupulously all provisions of international humanitarian law; awareness-raising and training efforts in that regard could be improved and his Government would be ready to contribute to such efforts.

42. The many recommendations made to the Secretariat by the Special Committee should not interfere with the Department's work in the service of peacekeeping operations. They did, however, reflect a desire to strengthen peacekeeping operations and the pressing need for increased cooperation and exchange of information between the Secretariat and Member States. The information meetings organized by the Department had proved extremely useful and meetings should continue to be held between the annual sessions of the Special Committee.

43. **Mr. Cassidy** (Indonesia) said the growing demand for United Nations peacekeeping operations demonstrated the importance of United Nations peacekeeping efforts in the search for, or maintenance of, peace. In that context, the problem of the commitment gap must be addressed. The current structure, where the developing world provided the bulk of peacekeeping troops was unworkable and must be reviewed. The creation of the "rapid reimbursement policy" was also important, given the need to assist troop-contributing countries facing budgetary constraints to meet rapid deployment timelines.

44. His delegation supported the six priorities identified by the Secretary-General and agreed that the Organization's response to the situation in Liberia indicated that some progress had been made with regard to rapid deployment, although much remained to be done. Measures to enhance the safety and security of unarmed civilian personnel must be reviewed, in particular in the light of the recent unprecedented attack in Baghdad. Unless unarmed civilian peacekeepers could be protected, it would be increasingly difficult to find appropriate personnel.

45. Reform and revitalization of United Nations peacekeeping should continue and must adhere to the principles of transparency, effectiveness and efficiency; the true effectiveness of the reforms could only be evaluated once they had been fully implemented, however. Cooperation should also be encouraged between the United Nations and regional organizations in every field, including conflict resolution, where the regional organizations had a unique understanding of the local environment. Successful regional efforts depended on good relations among member States of those organizations, political commitment on their part and the support of the international community. His delegation urged the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue its study of the principles and mechanisms of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in peacekeeping and peace support operations.

46. **Mr. Vankham** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that considerable progress had been achieved in some areas such as the rapid deployment of funds and strategic stocks, particularly the strategic deployment stocks in Brindisi, which had been able to provide needed equipment to UNMIL. His delegation continued to support the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to enhance the capability of UNSAS, particularly its capacity to deploy peacekeeping operations within 30 days, or within 90 days in the case of complex operations, from the adoption of a Security Council mandate. It welcomed the new mechanism proposed by the Department to accelerate reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and urged all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

47. His delegation attached the greatest importance to the safety and security of United Nations personnel. The terrible tragedy of 19 August in Baghdad had highlighted the need for serious consideration at the Special Committee's forthcoming annual session of measures to enhance the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers, particularly the unarmed civilian personnel of its peace missions. In that connection, he called for closer coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the office of the United Nations Security Coordinator. Referring to the commitment gap, he noted that the developing countries accounted for the majority of troop contributors and urged the developed countries to participate more actively in United Nations peacekeeping missions. Lastly, he urged the Department to increase its recruitment of staff members from underrepresented and unrepresented Member States.

48. **Mr. Yotov** (Bulgaria), announcing that Bulgaria would be chairing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2004, stressed the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in peacekeeping operations. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the structure of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo — a unique model of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, including OSCE, the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. On assuming the chairmanship, Bulgaria would make every effort to increase the contribution of OSCE to the maintenance of international peace and security through preventive diplomacy, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction. It was particularly important to strengthen cooperation between OSCE and the United Nations in all aspects of international security, in accordance with the framework for cooperation and coordination signed on 26 May 1993, and relevant United Nations resolutions, including General Assembly resolution 57/298.

49. In conclusion, the Joint Declaration on United Nations-European Union Cooperation in Crisis Management, adopted on 24 September, would be a major boon to future cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

50. **Mr. Awad** (Egypt) said that, since the deliberations had already lasted a number of days, his delegation would emphasize only a few points from its statement. The full text, in Arabic and English, would be distributed to Committee members. His delegation appreciated the dialogue that had followed the presentation by the Under-Secretary-General and hoped that that method would be used in considering all agenda items. He stressed the need to set priorities, and said that top priority should be given to establishing partnership among the various components and tools of peacekeeping, including the Security Council, the General Assembly (particularly the Special Political and Decolonization Committee), the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and other relevant Secretariat departments, the troop-contributing countries, regional and subregional organizations and the international donor community. It was to be hoped that the revitalization of the role of the General Assembly in the area of international peace and security would renew the concept of "uniting for peace" in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of General Assembly resolution 377 (V) of 1950. His delegation wished to propose that the theme of the Special Committee's next session should be "Participation of components available to the international community in the areas of peacekeeping, peace-building and peacemaking".

51. **Ms. Coelho da Cruz** (Angola) said that the escalation of conflicts could be avoided only through early warning based on an effective prevention strategy within the framework of the United Nations. She stressed the importance of an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to conflict situations, as proposed in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/58/323).

52. The deployment of peacekeepers between warring sides in Angola's 30-year conflict had been essential to maintaining a ceasefire and creating a political space for peace to take root. Peacekeeping operations must implement the rule of law and respect local culture, customs and religious practices. Ultimately, their success depended on the concepts underlying them and its implementation. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/58/1), peace agreements by themselves marked only the first step; rebuilding civil society and establishing and consolidating democracy were much longer-term commitments. The latest crises in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone had proved the need to further strengthen the authority of the United Nations and to increase the Security Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Poor countries remained much more vulnerable than developed countries to armed conflict, often triggered by social inequality, ethnic and religious tension or the struggle for control over economic resources. In that connection, it was vital to enhance African peacekeeping capabilities and to strengthen coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations.

53. In conclusion, she expressed her country's profound appreciation to all Member States which had participated in the United Nations Angola Verification Missions and the United Nations Observer Mission in

Angola and paid tribute to those who had sacrificed their lives to bring peace to the Angolan people. Her country aspired to become a troop-contributing country and participate in future peacekeeping operations.

54. **Mr. Guéhenno** (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said that the Department was gratified by Member States' recognition of the progress achieved in certain areas, including rapid deployment and mission support, and would be responsive to their call for increased safety and security. A number of delegations had raised the thorny issue of intelligence, an issue the Department had perhaps sidestepped in the past at the expense of human life and the effectiveness of operations. The Department would be making serious efforts to address the concerns expressed in that area. Chief among the contentious issues raised was the commitment gap. While Western countries supported peacekeeping efforts, chiefly the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and the international security force in Kosovo, the African missions seemed to have lower priority for them. That issue should not be allowed to divide the international community but neither should it be minimized. He believed that there were ways to deal with the problem, obtaining the best of what each side had to offer, for example, by drawing on the Western countries' capacities to assist with communication, air operations and special forces, but on a time-limited basis. The Department would be turning to Member States, and particularly the Special Committee, for guidance in that area. Based on Committee members' observations, he was cautiously optimistic about the forthcoming expansion in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

55. **Mr. Tesfu** (Ethiopia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Eritrea had levelled an unfounded accusation at Ethiopia in its statement of 17 October. Eritrea had accused Ethiopia of taking action which had endangered United Nations civilian and military personnel, but the fact was that the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) was in place because of Eritrea's aggression against Ethiopia. As UNMEE was deployed in the Temporary Security Zone, located, in its entirety, in Eritrea; it was virtually impossible for Ethiopia to exert any influence, either positive or negative, on its movements. It was ironic that Eritrea, which had thus far refused to sign the Status of Forces Agreement for UNMEE, should accuse Ethiopia of not cooperating with the Mission. Ethiopia had signed the Status of Forces Agreement soon after UNMEE was deployed.

56. Eritrea had also accused Ethiopian military personnel of "pointing their weapons at UNMEE patrols"; however, as he had indicated, UNMEE was assigned to patrol the Temporary Security Zone situated in Eritrea. Eritrea claimed that Ethiopia had laid new landmines in the Temporary Security Zone. In actual fact, Ethiopia had no access to that Zone, which was located in Eritrea in its entirety and under UNMEE supervision. If that accusation were true, UNMEE personnel should have been the first to complain but that had never happened.

57. It had become customary for Eritrea to accuse Ethiopia in all forums, irrespective of the agenda item under consideration. Had Ethiopia not been making every effort to avoid such unhelpful exchanges, it would have found no difficulty in citing the numerous instances in which UNMEE had been subjected to abuse by the Eritrean authorities.

58. Ethiopia had a wider responsibility for regional peace and security and was a troop-contributing country for various peacekeeping operations, including in Burundi, under the auspices of the African Union, and in Liberia under the auspices of the United Nations. Ethiopia's cooperation with UNMEE was fully commensurate with its interests and obligations.

59. **Mr. Tekle** (Eritrea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Ethiopian representative had raised certain issues only to create confusion. His delegation had no interest in replying to those baseless charges, which could not be corroborated by any third-party evidence. The Ethiopian representative's claim that the charges levelled by Eritrea were unfounded and baseless would no doubt amaze those Member States which had heard his delegation's statement of 17 October, quoting paragraph 3 of the progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2003/858):

> "On a number of occasions, Ethiopian militia fired shots from their territory to signal to the herdsmen the presence of Eritrean militia in the vicinity. During the month of August, several more serious incidents occurred in the Aromo area of the Zone (Sector Centre). On two separate occasions on 5 August, Ethiopian militia pointed their weapons at UNMEE patrols in response to advice not to enter the Zone. On 9, 10 and 12

> August, a total of 102 personnel, most of them in the Ethiopian Armed Forces uniforms, entered the Zone in the Drum Drum Stream area in the same sector, refusing to leave despite repeated protests by UNMEE at the sector level. Subsequently, UNMEE lodged strong protests with the Ethiopian authorities ..."

Nothing could be clearer than that. Unless steps were taken to stop such actions, some UNMEE lives would surely be lost.

Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/58/20 and A/58/174)

60. **The Chairman** said that, earlier in the year, the world had stood united in grief at the loss of Space Shuttle Columbia and its crew. That tragic incident had served as a reminder that space exploration involved risks, and that brave men and women who went on space missions jeopardized their lives to expand the world's knowledge of what lay beyond planet Earth, and to expand the benefits of space exploration for humankind. Human space flights had often been shining examples of international cooperation, with astronauts and cosmonauts demonstrating how much could be accomplished by working together regardless of their national and cultural background.

61. It was encouraging to see the continuing efforts to carry out human space flights for the benefit of all humankind. The International Space Station, the largest scientific project involving 16 countries, continued to have an international crew. He also wished to congratulate China on becoming the third country capable of launching humans into outer space. The crew on "Shenzou", which meant "divine vessel" in Chinese, had successfully flown in space and returned safely to earth. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, based in Vienna, had served as the leading agency and worked closely with the China Manned Space Engineering Programme Office, the China National Space Administration and the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations in Vienna in order to ensure the success of that flight.

62. The thirty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space would be celebrated on 3 December. Signed by 113 countries and ratified by 88, the Rescue Agreement called for international cooperation in rendering all necessary assistance to space craft personnel in the event of accident, distress or emergency landing. The Rescue Agreement was truly a tribute to those who were, in the words of the Outer Space Treaty, "envoys of mankind in outer space".

63. The United Nations, through the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, played a pivotal role in establishing the international legal framework governing outer space. Within that framework, both State and non-State actors worked together across borders to advance human exploration and knowledge of the "last frontier". The United Nations also played an important role in ensuring that countries continued to work together to apply the benefits of space activities in order to enhance human development and security. The International Satellite System for Search and Rescue (COSPAS-SARSAT), which used space technology to assist aviators and mariners in distress around the world, was an example of such cooperation. Since 1982, COSPAS-SARSAT had assisted in the rescue of over 15,000 persons.

64. Five space agencies continued to make progress towards an operational international structure for handling natural disaster management through the use of space systems. Through the International Charter "Space and Major Disasters", their satellites could be used to provide Earth observation images to civil protection authorities responding to major disasters. Since its entry into force in November 2000, the Charter had been activated about 30 times to respond to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides and floods. Earlier in the year the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs had become a cooperating body of the Charter, allowing United Nations entities to request and receive space-based data under the Charter. In August, the United Nations Office for Project Services, had become the first United Nations entity to take advantage of satellite images acquired during the floods and landslides in Nepal. The processed satellite images had been used by the civil protection authorities of Nepal in their response operations.

65. In addition to disaster management and emergency response, international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space had benefited humankind in many other areas. It was vital to ensure that all nations had easy access to the benefits of space science and technology, regardless of their degree of economic and scientific development. The Third United Nations

Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) had adopted a strategy for such cooperation. He was pleased to note the progress achieved by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Office for Outer Space Affairs in carrying out the recommendations of UNISPACE III.

66. **Mr. González** (Chile), Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, introducing the Committee's report (A/58/20), said that at the outset, he wished to congratulate the People's Republic of China for the success of its first human space flight mission, and express the hope that it would provide impetus in particular for developing countries to pursue the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space for the benefit of all humanity.

67. During the past few years under his chairmanship, the Committee had increased its efforts to establish a clear link between the needs of people and the benefits of space science and technology. As indicated in the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development, adopted by UNISPACE III, space science and technology had great potential to enhance human security and development. The Vienna Declaration contained a common strategy for realizing that potential, and in his view the Committee and its subcommittees had made good progress in that regard. However, the Committee had recognized that the benefits and potential of space science and technology had not been fully taken into account at recent United Nations global conferences, nor were the advances in space science and technology and their applications fully contributing to the improvement of the lives of many people, particularly those living in poverty in developing countries. The Committee had therefore begun to focus its work on the link between space and the priority areas of human security and development identified in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and by the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

68. The Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had made further progress in implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III through consideration, at the annual sessions of the Committee and its Subcommittees, of relevant agenda items; the work of action teams established by the Committee under the voluntary leadership of governments; and the activities of the Office for Outer Space Affairs. Two of the eleven action teams established in 2001 had submitted their final reports with recommendations for further action. The other action teams were currently at the point of finalizing their recommendations, and he appealed to all Member States to respond to their requests for information and feedback. At the 2003 session, the Committee had established an action team to address the question of knowledge-sharing through the promotion of universal access to space-based communication services; its work would be linked with objectives of the World Summit on the Information Society.

69. In 2003, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had concluded the work plan adopted in 2000 for considering the implementation of an integrated, space-based global natural disaster management system, and had reviewed possible global operational structures to handle natural disaster management, making maximum use of existing and planned space systems. That work was closely linked to that of the action team on disaster management, and since the team would be presenting the results of its work to the Subcommittee in 2004, the Committee had agreed that the Subcommittee should continue to consider that topic at its next session. Disaster management was an area of increasing synergy of efforts of members of the Committee, United Nations entities and Office for Outer Space Affairs. The Office had held a series of regional workshops on the use of space technology for disaster management and initiating follow-up projects; it had also recently become a cooperating body of the Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters. The agreement between the Office and the Charter enabled United Nations entities to request and receive space-based data in the event of disasters, and had seen its first use when the Office has forwarded a request from the United Nations Office for Project Services for satellite imagery of floods and landslides in Nepal in August 2003.

70. Strengthening inter-agency cooperation and increasing the use of space applications and services within and among entities of the United Nations system had also been considered under the three-year work plan adopted in 2000. In concluding the work plan in 2003, the Subcommittee had endorsed the proposals of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, included the convening of an open, informal session of the Inter-Agency Meeting to which member States of

the Committee would be invited, and a joint initiative by the Committee and the Inter-Agency Meeting to prepare a list of space-related initiatives and programmes that responded to specific recommendations in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

71. With regard to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, the Subcommittee had adopted a further multi-year work plan for the period from 2003 to 2006, and had agreed that the working group should continue its work during the intersessional period. In 2004, the Subcommittee would prepare a draft outline of the objectives, scope and attributes of an international technically-based framework of goals and recommendations for the safety of nuclear power source applications in outer space.

72. On the issue of space debris, he noted that the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) had presented its proposals on debris mitigation to the Subcommittee. The Committee had agreed that the Subcommittee could establish a working group at its next session to consider comments received from member States on the IADC proposals and to consider further progress on the subject, including discussions on means of endorsing utilization of the IADC space-debris mitigation guidelines.

73. As recommended by the Committee, the Subcommittee's agenda for the next session would include an item on space-system based telemedicine applications, to be considered under the three-year work plan adopted by the Committee in 2003, which also related to the work of the action team on public health. Solar-terrestrial physics would be considered as a single item for discussion during one session only. The Subcommittee was also continuing its efforts to strengthen partnerships with non-governmental entities including industry; at its next session, there would be a symposium on strengthening partnership with industry that would address small satellite applications in agriculture, health and human security.

74. Turning to the work of the Legal Subcommittee in 2003, he said that the Subcommittee had continued intense discussion of a preliminary draft protocol on matters specific to space assets to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment, and had established a working group on that item. The Subcommittee had also considered sub-items relating to the possibility of the United Nations serving as supervisory authority under the preliminary draft protocol and to the relationship between the terms of the preliminary draft protocol and the rights and obligations of States under the legal regime applicable to outer space. Noting that the draft protocol was a matter of high interest, particularly in the commercial sector, he expressed confidence that the Subcommittee could successfully meet the challenge of reconciling differences between existing space law and international financial practices.

75. The Legal Subcommittee has continued its consideration of the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit. It had also reconvened its working group to consider the status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space, and he noted with pleasure that the successful results of the first workshop on capacity-building in space law, organized in 2002 by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, had made important contributions to the work of the Subcommittee in that area. The Committee had recommended that at its next session, the Subcommittee should consider the practice of States and international organizations in registering space objects, under the four-year work plan adopted in 2003, and should discuss its contribution to the report being prepared by the Committee for submission to the General Assembly for its review of the progress made in the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations.

76. The Committee had continued to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. At its 2003 session, the Committee had agreed to consider ways to promote regional and interregional cooperation based on experiences stemming from the Space Conference of the Americas, in light of the recognition by the Committee of the efforts among Latin American and Caribbean countries to institutionalize the Conference as a mechanism for cooperation and coordination in various areas of space science and technology and their applications. The Committee had also agreed to consider the role of space technology in implementing recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

77. The Committee had continued its deliberations on the item entitled "Space and society", in direct response to the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration. It had agreed that the theme "Space and

education" should be a special focus of discussion under that agenda item for the period from 2004 to 2006. At the end of the work plan, the Committee would develop specific action plans to ensure that space-based services would contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal on access to education.

78. The Committee had further agreed to include an item entitled "Space and water" in the agenda of its next session. Space applications could successfully address various issues relating to water and could serve as confidence-building measures for a future international mechanism for monitoring and managing the use of water resources. He expressed the hope that all the relevant entities within the United Nations system dealing with water issues would contribute to the work of the Committee under that new agenda item in 2004.

79. Turning to procedural matters, he said that the Committee had arrived at a consensus agreement concerning the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies. The agreement included several new elements, such as a fixed pattern of rotation of offices among the regional groups, shortened terms of office, the need for consensus agreement on all the officers of the bureaux two years prior to the beginning of the next term, and enhanced opportunities for the outgoing, present and incoming members of the bureaux informally to discuss matters relating to the peaceful uses of outer space and to the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

80. The Committee had welcomed the interest of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in becoming a member; it had noted that Member States needed to consider the geographical distribution of the membership of the Committee, and that consultations would be necessary among the regional groups before a decision could be taken. The Committee had agreed to grant permanent observer status to the Regional Centre for Remote Sensing of the North African States and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis.

81. In conclusion, he said that space science and technology could expand people's opportunities to live full, creative lives with freedom and dignity, particularly in developing countries, and expressed confidence that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would continue to strengthen international cooperation in order to expand the choices available to people, thus successfully fulfilling its responsibility to achieve the goals enshrined in the Millennium Declaration and contributing to the promotion of human rights.

82. **Mr. Assaf** (Lebanon) expressed his delegation's strong support for the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and requested clarification as to the current accepted definition of the term "outer space" itself.

83. **Mr. González** (Chile), Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, said that while that Committee had been discussing the definition of the term for a number of years, all the proposals advanced so far had been juridically incompatible and no consensus had been reached.

84. **Mr. Lichem** (Austria) said that in the deliberations on the new form of leadership for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the core concern had been to bring the long-term, interdisciplinary and inter-institutional dimensions of the global agenda into meaningful focus for that leadership. For the first time in the United Nations system, de facto leaders could be identified two years prior to their actual assumption of responsibilities, thereby facilitating an institutional memory for both current and future leadership. In other words, the Committee had been provided with an effective "policy space" of six years in which to carry out its mandates, a solution whose wisdom was reflected by the unanimous support of all regional groupings and member countries of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

United Nations A/C.4/58/SR.12

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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 21 October 2003, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Loedel ..... (Uruguay)

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Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*)

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03-57123 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/58/20, A/58/174, A/C.4/58/L.7 and A/C.4/58/L.8)

1. **Mr. Adamou** (Niger) noted the growing importance of peace, development and multilateralism at a time of increasing complexity and uncertainty, and unprecedented threats to security. His delegation hoped that, at the current session, Member States would reach broad agreement on peace and development issues, forming a basis for further efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

2. It was in the interest of all countries to ensure the peaceful use of outer space and to halt the militarization of space and the arms race. His delegation therefore encouraged the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) to strengthen the mechanisms for coordinating its work with that of other bodies, such as the Conference on Disarmament, with a view to accelerating the negotiation of appropriate legal instruments to that end. Such cooperation would enable developed and developing countries to exchange information on recent achievements in the peaceful uses and non-militarization of outer space, which belonged to all humankind.

3. **Mr. Assaf** (Lebanon) expressed his delegation's sympathy with the United States in connection with the Columbia space shuttle disaster. His delegation also commended the Russian Federation for bringing back a number of United States astronauts from the international space station on board a Russian spacecraft and congratulated China on recently becoming the third country to join the elite club of space-faring nations.

4. His delegation wished to emphasize the importance of implementing the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development and the five international treaties of the United Nations governing outer space activities. Outer space should be used for the benefit of all mankind without any limitation implied by the imposition of sovereignty over it; the exploration of space, access to its planets and the right to conduct scientific research should be available to all on the basis of equality.

5. States should restrict their use of outer space exclusively to peaceful purposes; they should not establish bases or non-civilian installations in outer space and should not conduct military tests or experiments in space or deploy weapons, particularly weapons of mass destruction. Negotiations must be held leading to the adoption of an international treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. There were numerous spin-off benefits from space technology in such areas as agriculture, medical research and transportation safety; there were also benefits in the form of improved communications through the Internet.

6. Another important issue was the definition and delimitation of space, which had been exhaustively discussed but had not been finally settled, despite an agreement on the legal regime applicable to outer space. That was now a matter of urgency in order to enable States to find a legal basis for regulating the limits of sovereignty and resolving issues that might arise from collisions between objects in space.

7. In conclusion, he said that his delegation supported the candidature of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for full membership of COPUOS.

8. **Mr. Zhanibekov** (Kazakhstan) said that Kazakhstan was participating in a number of international projects related to the use of space science and technology for the protection of the environment. His country had also signed agreements with the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Belarus to join together in using the Baikonur cosmodrome for peaceful purposes. Kazakh scientists were working with sources of ionizing radiation associated with the preparation and launching of spacecraft from Baikonur with the objective of preventing damage to the environment resulting from the use of space technology. Since 1991, Kazakhstan had participated in manned space programmes of the Russian Federation. Kazakhstan's space institutions were also interested in developing cooperation with the United States of America under the agreement between Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and the United States on technological guarantees relating to the launch of the Inmarsat-3 artificial earth satellite.

9. Preservation of the environment must become one of the most important areas of international

cooperation, with wide application of the latest achievements of space science and technology. Some of the most pressing global problems were the shortage of drinking water and the progressive degradation of the soil, as well as increasing economic damage resulting from natural and man-made disasters. For Kazakhstan, which had had to cope in practical terms with the global environmental disaster of the Aral Sea, the use of space science and technology for environmental monitoring and preservation was of enormous significance.

10. Kazakhstan placed great value on the contribution made by COPUOS in promoting international space activity and the development of space law, and believed that it should retain its leading role in further strengthening international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

11. **Ms. Baaziz** (Algeria) welcomed the efforts of COPUOS to follow up the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. Outer space was the province of all humankind and must remain an area of peace and cooperation among States. Algeria fully endorsed the strategy to promote the use of outer space for the development and well-being of all peoples, particularly the developing countries. Such a strategy must increase the access of developing countries to space technologies and techniques, gradually narrowing the enormous gap between rich and poor countries in that field.

12. Algeria attached great importance to space technologies, as illustrated by its activities in remote sensing and cartography, and its application of satellite data to agriculture, water resources, natural disaster prevention and management, environmental protection, land development and meteorology. Algeria also participated in global navigation satellite systems and the Global meteorological observations. In that connection, she wished to highlight the successful design, realization and testing of the ALSAT-1 remote-sensing microsatellite, launched in November 2002 with a view to the prevention and management of major risks.

13. Lastly, she expressed her delegation's support for the candidacy of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to become a member of COPUOS.

14. **Mr. Gellet** (France) praised the important compromise reached by COPUOS and its two Subcommittees on the composition of their bureaux and the designation of their chairmen. The General Assembly had called for such a compromise at its previous session; its attainment owed much to the dedication and commitment of the delegation of Austria. He paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman of COPUOS, under whose watch the reforms had taken shape, and welcomed the historic choice of an African candidate as his successor. Lastly, France wished to congratulate China on its first manned space flight, *Shenzhou V*.

15. **Mr. Lopez** (Cuba) congratulated China on its first manned space flight, whose findings were certain to be channelled into benefiting all humankind. Outer space was the common heritage of humankind and its exploration and use should be governed by three basic principles. First, outer space must be preserved for exclusively peaceful purposes, its exploration should go hand in hand with increased international cooperation and the transfer of sophisticated space technology to developing countries in order to narrow the huge gap between the developed and developing countries. Cuba rejected proposals to revise the principles relevant to the Use of Nuclear Sources in Outer Space; those proposals did not take into account the interests of all States, particularly the developing countries.

16. Second, his delegation strongly opposed any plans to pursue the arms race in space. The issue was particularly urgent in view of the latest militarist doctrines, which would inevitably lead to the development and deployment of new and expensive weapons of annihilation and destruction with the aim of increasing the hegemony of the most powerful nations over the rest of the world. His delegation was deeply concerned that some nuclear Powers, which were also space Powers, were blocking negotiations by the Conference on Disarmament on an international instrument for the prevention of an arms race in space. In that connection, a moratorium on the deployment of weapons in outer space would be an important practical measure.

17. Third, with respect to space law, his delegation agreed that the existing legal regime applicable to outer space was not sufficient to guarantee the prevention of an arms race in space. Mechanisms for the adequate monitoring and verification of space law must be adopted as a matter of urgency.

18. His delegation supported the strengthening of COPUOS and its two Subcommittees. It welcomed the increased participation by Member States as observers in the forty-sixth session of COPUOS and fully supported the request by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to become a member of that Committee.

19. Cuba attached special importance to reducing to a minimum the potential consequences of space debris, and to focusing greater attention on the collision of space objects, particularly those containing nuclear power sources. Responsibilities in that area must be clearly defined.

20. In conclusion, he called for greater international and regional cooperation in outer space, which should in no way be privatized or limited to a select group of developed States.

21. **Mr. Yahya** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) congratulated China on becoming the third country to launch a manned spacecraft, thereby furthering the efforts to explore space for the benefit of all mankind, despite such tragic incidents as the recent loss of the space shuttle Columbia and its crew.

22. His country strongly supported the role of COPUOS in the implementation of the plan of action proposed by the Office for Outer Space Affairs to give effect to the recommendations of UNISPACE III, as well as the allocation of all necessary financial resources to implement the related programmes, particularly the strengthening of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and programmes of benefit to the developing countries in such areas as disaster management, tele-education and tele-medicine, environmental protection, management of natural resources, and education and capacity-building. His delegation was also in favour of supporting the regional centres for space science and technology education. It attached particular importance to the problem of space debris and the need for international cooperation to address that issue and the problem of collisions of space objects, including those with nuclear power sources on board, with space debris. Other matters of interest to his delegation were the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit. His delegation also supported the drafting of a universal comprehensive convention on international space law together with arrangements to prevent the militarization of outer space.

23. His country, which attached particular importance to space science and its various applications, had established a Centre for Space Science for that purpose in 1991 which maintained wide-ranging regional and international relations. His country had also sent observers to attend meetings of COPUOS and had contributed financial assistance to certain activities of that Committee.

24. His Government reiterated its request to COPUOS to grant it full membership. A decision to that effect would improve the Committee's geographical balance, strengthen the role of Africa and provide a powerful stimulus to the developing countries, encouraging them to play a greater role in international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. It would also be an indication that political differences between States did not prevent their cooperation on peaceful and humanitarian matters.

25. **Mr. Zhang** Yishan (China) thanked Committee members for congratulating China on its successful launch of the "*Shenzhou V*" manned spacecraft. His Government had always believed that outer space should be used solely for peaceful purposes. Its increasing militarization was not only posing a grave threat but also negatively affecting international arms control, disarmament efforts and international security in general. A legally binding international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space was urgently needed.

26. With regard to the Legal Subcommittee's deliberations on the draft protocol on matters specific to space assets to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment, his delegation was not opposed to designating the United Nations as the supervisory authority, provided that the Organization would not bear an additional financial burden and would be immune from liability for damages. The terms of the draft protocol should be based on existing space law and respect for the fundamental principles contained therein. In the event of conflict, those existing principles should prevail. His delegation supported continuing efforts to find specific ways to harmonize the draft protocol with the existing legal regime applicable to outer space.

27. As co-chair of the action team for recommendation 7 on disaster reduction and management, his delegation had participated actively in the implementation of the recommendations of

UNISPACE III. Together with Canada and France, it would continue its efforts to implement the work plan and to promote the implementation of an integrated, space-based global natural disaster management system.

28. China's space activities in the past year, had included the successful launching of the *Shenzhou V* manned spacecraft on 15 October, following the successful launching and recovery of the test spacecraft *Shenzhou III* and *Shenzhou IV*. Additionally, the fourth polar-orbiting meteorological satellite, *Fengyun-1D*, and the first marine satellite, *Haiyang-1*, had been successfully launched, upgrading China's capacity for global meteorological observation, the exploration of marine resources, marine pollution control, maritime disaster monitoring and control, and marine environmental protection. They also played a significant role in China's integrated coastal management and regional economic development planning. In May, China's third navigation satellite, *Beidou-1*, had been successfully launched into orbit, forming a regional navigation and positioning network that was expected to boost national economic development in such areas as transportation, meteorology, the petroleum industry, oceanography, forest fire prevention, disaster forecast, telecommunications and public security. In the past year, China had also cooperated with many other countries, including Brazil, in the field of outer space.

29. **Mr. Hodgkins** (United States of America) said that the tragic loss of the United States space shuttle earlier in the year had been a stark reminder of the difficulties and dangers that remained in the quest to explore the world beyond the Earth's atmosphere. At the same time, the People's Republic of China was to be congratulated for its admirable recent achievement in human space flight.

30. The 1962 Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space represented a significant first step in codifying the fundamental legal principles governing the orderly exploration and use of outer space and had set the stage for the four core treaties that still governed space activities. Those treaties established a framework that had encouraged outer space exploration for the benefit of both space-faring and non-space-faring nations, on a humanitarian and non-discriminatory basis, ensuring freedom of scientific investigation and bearing in mind the simple but profound humanitarian notion that astronauts should be regarded as envoys of mankind and rendered all possible international assistance.

31. There was now an unprecedented level of international cooperation in space. The United States had a long and successful history of civil space cooperation with other partners, having concluded over 3,000 agreements with over 100 nations and international organizations. There was now a significant private sector presence in outer space. The position taken by a few delegations that COPUOS should consider matters relating to the militarization of outer space was therefore unjustified. There was no scarcity of multilateral bodies where disarmament matters could and were appropriately being discussed, and COPOUS, as the only standing body of the General Assembly to consider international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, was not one of them.

32. Regarding the Legal Subcommittee, the United States believed that the preliminary draft protocol to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment would facilitate the commercial financing that was key to the success of private space activities. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee's work on nuclear power sources in space had been particularly successful. His delegation was also pleased to note that the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) had submitted preliminary guidelines on debris mitigation to the Subcommittee, a pivotal step in ensuring the preservation of near-Earth space for future generations. The Subcommittee's consideration of the use of space technology for the medical sciences and public health could yield very useful results. His delegation welcomed the decision to consider new agenda items at its next session relating to solar terrestrial physics and an integrated space-based global natural-disaster management system.

33. The session of COPUOS itself had been most productive. His delegation welcomed the substantial progress made by the UNISPACE III action teams and the Committee's decision to consider new items on space education and the use of space technology for water resources management at its next session.

34. **Ms. Anguiano** (Mexico) said that her Government, congratulated the Government of China on the successful conclusion of its first manned space flight. Her Government was aware of the enormous benefits to be derived by the developing countries from

the whole range of activities in outer space, and therefore endorsed the direction taken by COPUOS in bringing its work closer in line with the major United Nations priorities.

35. Mexico was proud that one of its nationals was now directing the Office for Outer Space Affairs and was pleased that the United Nations Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for Latin America and the Caribbean, headquartered in Brazil and in Mexico, had been established. The courses offered by the Centre would strengthen the capacity of the countries of the region to use space science and technology for their own development.

36. The action teams established by COPUOS to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE-III had done particularly useful work. Mexico had taken part in three of them. That work would lead to projects addressing specific problems in countries confronted with a variety of conditions.

37. The Legal Subcommittee should make greater efforts to persuade more countries to ratify or accede to the outer space treaties. The Subcommittee should also provide more assistance to States wishing to adopt legislation compatible with those instruments.

38. The system of equitable geographical rotation in the membership of the bureaux of COPUOS and its two subcommittees and the practice of holding informal consultations between the bureaux would no doubt revitalize the work of the Committee.

39. **Mr. Kuzmenkov** (Russian Federation) congratulated China on putting its first cosmonaut into space and said that it was an event of historic significance which showed the whole world the enormous contribution that country could make to scientific and technological progress.

40. The Russian Federation consistently held the position that placing weapons of any kind in outer space should be prohibited and that the use of or threat of the use of force in space or from space must be renounced. Unfortunately, recent discussion by COPUOS of the ways and means of supporting the regime of the peaceful uses of outer space had been insufficiently active and the subject had not received the attention it deserved. The Russian Federation called on Member States to make full use of the Committee's unique potential as the body in which fruitful discussion of the subject should take place.

41. The Russian Federation supported the progressive development of international space law, and regarded COPUOS and its Subcommittees as playing the leading role in that process. At the suggestion of the Russian Federation, those bodies had taken up the question of the expediency and desirability of elaborating a single comprehensive convention on space law. There was an urgent need to adapt the existing norms of international space law to current requirements and realities. A comprehensive convention would not only codify existing norms but could make a significant contribution to the progressive development of international law. The "package" approach proposed by the Russian Federation could be a more acceptable way of reconciling the interests of member States without infringing on their sovereign rights or on their priorities in the area of space activities. Drawing up an international legal instrument of the nature and scale of a comprehensive convention would require significant efforts on the part of the world community, but the benefits were worth it.

42. **Mr. Abiodun** (Nigeria), after extending congratulations to China, said that the peaceful use of outer space offered an opportunity for global cooperation and advancement through the protection and management of the environment. Space science and technology were being used increasingly to monitor the implementation of international agreements, and space applications had become fundamental to achieving sustainable development in both industrialized and developing countries.

43. Commending the reorganization of the bureaux of COPUOS and its two Subcommittees, he said that his delegation looked forward to working with them on issues such as space education and the mitigation of natural disasters. Nigeria was also participating in three of the action teams.

44. His Government had developed a space policy and programme and established a national space research and development agency. The focus of its policy was on the development of indigenous capability in the major areas of space science and technology and on using space capabilities as a tool for resource management, infrastructure development, environmental monitoring, sustainable development and communications. Its space agency had collaborated with others within and outside Africa; it had, for instance, worked with South Africa to develop a land information system to improve rice production in

Nigeria. In September, Nigeria had launched its first space satellite — the Sat-1 — a low-Earth-orbit microsatellite for disaster monitoring, which was part of a constellation of four other microsatellites owned by the United Kingdom, Algeria, Thailand and Viet Nam. Nigeria had also recently signed the Liability Convention and the Registration Convention.

45. In connection with the COPUOS recommendations on inter-agency cooperation, Nigeria suggested that United Nations agencies engaged in space activities should always take into consideration the infrastructures in the developing countries in which they worked, infrastructures which had often been put in place by the United Nations itself through the regional centres for space science and technology education.

46. **Mr. Rao** (India) said that his delegation welcomed the progress achieved by COPUOS at its forty-sixth session, notably the plan to rotate the five bureau posts among the five regional groups, and expressed satisfaction with the work of the two Subcommittees. His Government hoped that the report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session would provide an opportunity to take a critical look at the practical achievements resulting from the UNISPACE-III recommendations and their benefits, in quantifiable terms, for the developing countries.

47. His delegation noted with appreciation the activities covered by the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, in spite of budgetary constraints. One of the programme's very important priority themes was that of the integrated, space-based global natural disaster management system. India fully endorsed the COPUOS plan to hold a one-day workshop during its next session focusing on satellite-based communication as a vital component in coping with natural disasters, and requested all Member States to encourage as many communications satellites operators as possible to participate. India was pleased to note that space systems-based tele-medicine had been included in the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and considered that the work of the Legal Subcommittee on the status and applications of the five outer space treaties deserved the full support of Member States.

48. Turning to the achievements of India's space programme in the past year, he said that in April 2003 a multi-purpose satellite built by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), INSAT-3A, had been launched into a geostationary transfer orbit, and had since been operationalized for television broadcasting, telecommunications, search and rescue and meteorological services. The second developmental flight of India's geosynchronous launch vehicle had been successfully carried out in May 2003, and an Indian communications satellite, INSAT-3E, had been launched on board an Ariane-V launch vehicle in September 2003. India's space programme was placing particular emphasis on such space applications as a tele-medicine, distance education and the use of remote-sensing satellites for the sustainable development of natural resources.

49. International cooperation was an important component of India's space programme. ISRO had hosted the twenty-first meeting of the IADC in March 2003 and had signed a memorandum of understanding on bilateral cooperation with the Canadian Space Agency. The Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, which was affiliated with the United Nations and operated from India, continued to make good progress, providing specialist courses for more than 500 scholars from nearly 40 countries.

50. **Mr. Lichem** (Austria) said it was appropriate that in the current International Year of Freshwater the opportunity should be taken to focus on the contribution which space science and technology could make to the development and use of water resources. Unsustainable development and global warming had created dramatic conditions with regard to the availability of water resources in some regions, and the problems were exacerbated when water was shared among different uses and hence among different jurisdictions. There was also the question of competing interests among sovereign jurisdictions which shared international water resources either as international rivers or as transboundary aquifers. The supply of space-based data could make a most important contribution to solving the inter-jurisdictional dimension of water resources development and use. Shared data upon which policies, programmes, project development and operations could be based already represented a most significant institutional advancement. Austria therefore welcomed wholeheartedly the decision of COPUOS to include in its agenda a new item entitled "Space and water".

51. The Committee's new focus was already supported by concrete programmes and initiatives, including the European Space Agency's TIGER Programme of "Earth Observation for Integrated Water Resources Management in Africa". A recent international workshop on the topic, held in Rabat, Morocco, had formulated a series of specific recommendations on how to proceed in the African region with regard to space technology applications for water management. The plan of action adopted at the workshop included the establishment within national water resources administrations of focal points for "water and space", the development of institutional capacities for African water agencies and the provision of privileged and where possible free access to space-based data in a timely fashion. An international conference, to be held in Chile in early April 2004, would focus on implementing space technology for water resources management in Latin America. In view of the difficult water resources situation in Central Asia, it had been suggested that a similar event be convened at the United Nations Office at Vienna in early May 2004 to review the contribution space could make to enhanced cooperation in international water resources management in the Aral Sea basin.

52. Austria was very pleased to note the interest in and readiness to contribute effectively to the "space and water" initiative on the part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as national and regional space agencies.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

United Nations A/C.4/58/SR.13

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Summary record of the 13th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 23 October 2003, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Loedel ..... (Uruguay)

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03-57690 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/58/20, A/58/174, A/C.4/58/L.7 and A/C.4/58/L.8)

1. **Mr. Fallouh** (Syrian Arab Republic) expressed his delegation's solidarity with the United States of America over the tragic accident of Space Shuttle Columbia and congratulated China on being the third nation to send an astronaut into space. He noted with satisfaction the efforts of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) to implement the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) and welcomed the overall global trend to utilize outer space for humanitarian and development purposes, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries. His delegation remained concerned, however, at programmes to militarize outer space, and stressed that the peaceful use of outer space required a sincere commitment to the ongoing development of clear-cut rules and regulations to counter abuse and prevent an arms race in space. In that connection, he hailed efforts by some States to reduce expenditure on the militarization of space, instead channelling those resources into development, remote sensing, communications, crop surveillance, natural disaster control, environmental preservation and programmes to redress economic, environmental and health problems. The Syrian Arab Republic had established a remote sensing facility as an investment in its national scientific development.

2. The issues of space debris and preventing the collision of space objects, particularly those containing nuclear fuels, must be dealt with more seriously. States which had nuclear-powered satellites should be responsible for providing more complete information on their vehicles, including their structure and fuel, and on the safety measures they adopted.

3 In conclusion, his delegation would welcome the addition of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the membership of COPUOS.

4. **Mr. Takahashi** (Japan) said that, in the past year, the reliability of Japan's H-IIA launch vehicle had been further enhanced as a result of its fourth and fifth successful launchings, in December 2002 and March 2003 respectively. Technology transfer to private companies involving the H-IIA was now under way and was expected to enhance the launch vehicle's reliability, reduce its cost and contribute to the utilization of space by humankind. In May 2003, Japan had also successfully launched the engineering experimental satellite *Hayabusa*, using the M-V launch vehicle. *Hayabusa*, which meant "falcon", was programmed to approach the asteroid *Itokawa* (1998SF36) to collect sample material from the surface and return to Earth in 2007. Promoting international cooperation would be one of the most important tasks of the newly established Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, which merged three existing Japanese space organizations, the National Space Development Agency of Japan, the Institute of Space and Astronautical Science and the National Aerospace Laboratory of Japan.

5. Convinced that all humankind should benefit from space exploration, Japan was actively cooperating with other countries within the framework of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites. It was also promoting the Integrated Global Observing Strategy and had launched the Advanced Earth Observation Satellite II featuring five major sensors, including those developed by the United States of America and France. As for utilization of the space environment, Japan would contribute to the International Space Station (ISS) programme by developing an essential component, the Japanese Experimental Module known as "Kibo" or "hope". It was cooperating closely with participants in the ISS programme.

6. His delegation welcomed the increasing synergy among COPUOS, the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities in their efforts to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III. Japan had served as chair of the action team for recommendation 17 and, within that context, had carried out education and training activities in cooperation with other Member States and organizations. Japan would also be participating in the work of other action teams expected to provide input to the Working Group established to review the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations. Japan's proposal with regard to Earth observation had been adopted by the Group of Eight at its Evian Summit and incorporated in its Action Plan. Japan would host the Tokyo Ministerial Conference in the second quarter of

2004 to develop a framework for implementing that proposal.

7. In conclusion, his delegation wished to congratulate China on the successful launching of *Shenzhou V* and the return of its "taikonaut" to Earth.

8. **Mr. Acuña** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the member countries of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR), Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, and the associated States, Bolivia and Chile, extended congratulations to China on its successful launch of a manned spacecraft, and stressed the priority of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes, for the benefit of all humankind, taking particular account of the needs of developing countries.

9. Continued efforts must be made to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III in the areas highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General, including the development of international space law. Cooperation must be encouraged in such fields as international scientific campaigns, the dissemination of satellite data, teaching and training assistance to third countries and the creation of institutional space capacities in such countries, in view of their importance to human development. MERCOSUR supported the inclusion of a new item entitled "Space and water" in the COPUOS agenda for its forty-seventh session, which would strengthen international cooperation in the exploitation and improved management of water resources. International cooperation would also help in introducing innovative applications in such areas as tele-education and telemedicine, increasing the participation of developing countries in the space sector and optimizing the use of their public resources.

10. MERCOSUR noted with satisfaction that COPUOS had expressed its unconditional support for the efforts of the working group to prepare a report to the General Assembly for the 2004 review of the implementation of the UNISPACE III recommendations. It attached particular importance to the recommendations on improving knowledge-sharing through the promotion of universal access to space-based communication services (recommendation 9), sustainable development (recommendation 11), innovative sources of financing (recommendation 32), and to preparations for the implementation of experimental projects on the basis of proposals by the various action teams.

11. MERCOSUR welcomed the progress reported in the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and was gratified that the United Nations Programme on Space Applications had selected priority fields of action, which were of great importance for developing countries. The activities of the Legal Subcommittee were also of great interest, particularly with regard to the benefits of existing outer space treaties for both space-faring and non-space-faring nations as well as the Subcommittee's proposed review of the activities of international organizations relating to space law. It would be very useful for COPUOS to contemplate elaborating a convention on remote sensing containing updated principles.

12. Efforts to establish regional cooperation and coordination mechanisms must be pursued. The regional body for cooperation and coordination in space matters established by the Fourth Space Conference of the Americas, held in Cartagena de Indias in 2002, was viewed by Latin American and Caribbean countries as crucial to ensuring their active and systematic enjoyment of the benefits of space activities. In that connection, COPUOS had noted the desire of Member States in the Latin American and Caribbean region to institutionalize the Space Conference of the Americas, a key initiative for the development of space activity in the region.

13. **Mr. Chaudhry** (Pakistan) expressed his delegation's heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America on the tragic loss of the Space Shuttle Columbia. He also wished to congratulate China on its successful launch of its first manned space vehicle, *Shenzhou V*.

14. The militarization of outer space must be avoided at all costs and, if possible, reversed. Despite arguments to the contrary, COPUOS was indeed competent to address that issue. His delegation was in favour of concluding a comprehensive convention to prevent an arms race in outer space and supported the draft document on possible elements for a future international legal agreement on averting the placement of weapons in outer space, elaborated by China and the Russian Federation at the Conference on Disarmament in 2002. Pakistan also agreed that the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space should be reviewed, particularly their safety and

risk reduction aspects. It welcomed the progress already achieved in that regard and again called for the use of the Basic Safety Standards development process of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in connection with those Principles. IAEA was the only body competent to deal with that issue.

15. He reiterated the importance of equitable access by all countries, particularly the developing countries, to the geostationary orbit. The divisive issue of States' rights in that regard was not the only one that deserved attention; it was equally vital to continue examining the orbit's legal and technical aspects. Pakistan supported the incorporation of the Principles Relating to the Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space in a more binding legal instrument and believed that easy and low-cost access to remote-sensing data for developing countries was particularly important. Expressing his delegation's support for the disaster management support initiatives of COPUOS, he said that since 1991, Pakistan's national space agency, the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission, had been operating the Pakistan Mission Control Centre and the Pakistan Local User Terminal for the International Satellite System for Search and Rescue. The Terminal served as a ground service provider for disaster management support and covered several countries in the vicinity of Pakistan as well as the Arabian Sea. His delegation was convinced that communication infrastructures for early warning systems could be set up in outer space.

16. All countries deserved to benefit from satellite-based data and teaching assistance and training in institutional capabilities. He therefore lamented the adverse impact of limited voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. Resources were needed not only for long-term and short-term training facilities for developing countries but also to implement the earlier recommendations of COPUOS in that regard. Lastly, he re-emphasized the need to increase developing countries' access to space technology and reduce the existing gap between rich and poor countries in that field.

17. **Mr. Kiandee** (Malaysia) congratulated China on its successful manned space mission and stressed the need for genuine commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space in order to ensure the continued well-being of humanity and protect the planet's environment and resources. He endorsed the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III (A/58/174); the implementation mechanism established by COPUOS had strengthened cooperation within the United Nations system and between it and intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies for the application of the benefits of space science and technology.

18. Greater efforts should be made to prevent the militarization of outer space, in particular by drawing up an international agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space and to prohibit the development of weapons in outer space. COPUOS could play an important role in that regard.

19. Malaysia had always supported efforts aimed at peaceful cooperation in outer space; the Malaysian National Space Agency was responsible for Malaysia's space programme, which included implementation of a national satellite programme and ratification of United Nations space treaties and conventions. Malaysia was also actively involved in regional cooperative endeavours through the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum and the Association of South-East Asian Nations. In the area of interregional cooperation, Malaysia and Greece were co-chairing the action team on improving knowledge-sharing through the promotion of universal access to space-based communication services.

20. With a view to contributing to the development of international space law and the preparation of international agreements on practical applications for the peaceful uses of space science and technology, in 2004 his Government would host a meeting of the working group of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law on the draft Space Protocol, which would provide the countries of the Asia-Pacific region with an opportunity to review that protocol.

21. His Government was concerned by the ecological and economic effects of biomass burning and forest fires, including in peat areas in South-East Asia; there was a need for comprehensive monitoring and intervention capability. His Government therefore proposed to establish a space-borne real-time autonomous forest fire, peat fire and haze detection and monitoring system which would meet Malaysian requirements and also address regional forest fire and haze problems. Such a system would greatly improve the response time in emergency situations.

22. The rapid growth in the communications, entertainment and information industries had led to a growth in demand for satellite capacity in the region. A new optical satellite capable of 2.5 metres resolution, called RazakSAT, would be launched in 2005 and future satellites would expand regional coverage and serve as back-up to existing satellites. The new network would have an expansive footprint over Africa, Europe, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region and would also have high-powered switchable spot beams over other regions in Asia.

23. His Government was also seeking to bridge the digital divide by means of the multimedia supercorridor project whose flagship programmes of tele-health and tele-education would take advantage of space technology. He invited suitable partners in the region to cooperate with his Government in developing technology transfer, science missions and training programmes in space-related education and industries.

24. **Mr. Ri Song Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) congratulated China on the successful launch of its first manned spacecraft and said that outer space was the common property of humankind and should therefore be explored and exploited for the well-being of all humankind. There could be no monopoly on outer space and all countries had the right to participate in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. The rights of developing countries must be respected.

25. His Government expressed concern at steps towards increased militarization of outer space, such as the use of reconnaissance satellites for espionage. Technology for the launch of artificial satellites for the peaceful exploration of outer space was being misused to prepare the way for a missile defence system, the development of which would constitute a grave challenge to the peaceful exploration of outer space and bring about military confrontation and an arms race in outer space. His delegation therefore supported the draft document on possible elements for a future international legal agreement on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects.

26. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea had successfully launched its first artificial satellite in August 1998, marking a new step in the development of independent science and technology for the exploration of outer space. It was proud of that achievement and would make every effort to engage in cooperation and exchanges with other countries in the peaceful uses of outer space.

27. **Mr. Awad** (Egypt) said that his delegation joined others in congratulating China on its first manned space flight. He reiterated his delegation's support for the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development, which provided a clear framework for the peaceful use of space technology for the benefit of mankind. The recommendations contained in that Declaration should be implemented by all Member States. He welcomed the continued efforts of COPUOS to reinforce multilateral cooperation for the peaceful exploration of outer space and to provide a legal framework for the use of space technology at the international and regional levels.

28. It was important to make the benefits of space technology more broadly available, in particular for the developing countries; COPUOS must continue its efforts to encourage space-related research in the developing countries and to increase their capacity for adapting space technology for use in areas such as agriculture, industry and health. In that context, he reiterated his delegation's support for the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries. However, he cautioned against the use of concepts or language in United Nations and other forums about which there was not a consensus, for example, the notion of "human security" mentioned in paragraph 36 of draft resolution A/C.4/58/L.7.

29. His delegation was in favour of increasing the number of members of COPUOS. The only criteria for membership should be an ability to be objective and a desire to contribute to the Committee's work. His delegation supported the request of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to become a member of the Committee and urged rapid action on that request, preferably by the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

30. **Mr. Villacís** (Ecuador), after congratulating China on its recent successful space mission, praised the humanistic outlook of COPUOS and its work to ensure that the benefits of space science and technology were used for the greater good of all mankind. He recalled that certain resources, including outer space, could not be owned by particular

individuals or groups, and must be considered as the shared heritage of all mankind. There was a need for legal instruments to ensure that such resources were exploited for the benefit of all, since their improper appropriation or exploitation would have an adverse effect on quality of life and the environment.

31. His delegation supported the recommendations contained in the report of COPUOS (A/58/20). The report should serve as a tool to secure the cooperation of all States in ensuring that space technology was used for the benefit of all the peoples of the planet, especially facing both natural and man-made problems such as extreme poverty, which was caused by unequal distribution of wealth. He welcomed the Committee's decision to include a new agenda item entitled "Space and water" in its agenda, given the close link between water resources and human development.

32. The peaceful use of outer space was of great importance for human development, in particular for the least developed countries, which should have an opportunity to share in the benefits of space exploration and participate in space research. Countries having advanced space technology should share that technology so as to help needy populations through distance education, telemedicine and disaster management. Exchange of information and technology transfer would increase awareness of the benefits of the exploration of outer space and prevent the abuse of space technology, which could lead to the destruction of the entire planet. His delegation was confident the international community would work to ensure that space technology was used to promote economic progress in areas such as agriculture, medical research, security, transportation and environmental and resource management. Greater solidarity and cooperation among nations would contribute to increased standards of living, particularly for the peoples of the developing countries.

33. *The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 5.25 p.m.*

Draft resolution A/C.4/58/L.7: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

34. **Mr. González Aninat** (Chile), introducing draft resolution A/C.4/58/L.7, said that the text was very similar to that of the previous year's resolution, with some exceptions.

35. The last phrase of the eighth preambular paragraph, after the date "1999", had been revised to read: "and the need to promote the use of space technology towards implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration". Paragraphs 3 to 9 and 16 to 22 reflected the recommendations of COPUOS concerning the work to be conducted by its two Subcommittees, and paragraphs 10 to 14 reflected the agreement it had reached on the composition of its Bureau and those of its subsidiary bodies. Paragraphs 24 and 25 reflected the success of the Fourth Space Conference of the Americas and the follow-up action taken.

36. Matters relating to the follow-up to UNISPACE III were covered in paragraphs 26 to 31. At the end of paragraph 26, the final phrase "particularly ..." should be revised to read "bearing in mind the need to promote the use of space technology towards implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration;".

37. Paragraphs 36 to 39 related to the need to promote the use of space science and technology and their applications in furthering social, economic and cultural development, and the efforts being made in that regard by the United Nations bodies concerned. The text of paragraph 36 should be revised to read:

> "*Notes* that space science and technology and their applications could make important contributions to economic, social and cultural development and welfare as indicated in 'The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development', and *further notes* that the International Fair on Air and Space to be held in Santiago, Chile, in early 2004 will address in an international conference the issue of 'Space and Water towards Sustainable Development and Human Security'".

Paragraph 39 should also be revised; after the words "could contribute to", the rest of the paragraph should be deleted and replaced by: "implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration, particularly in the areas relating to, inter alia, food security and increasing opportunities for education;".

38. Paragraphs 41 to 46 set out the work that COPUOS planned to do in 2004, including the two new items to be included in its agenda. In paragraph 46, the verb "*invites*" should be inserted before the words "other governmental entities".

39. Paragraph 47 should be revised to read:

> "*Welcomes* the continued interest of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to become a member of the Committee and to this end, *requests* that constructive consultations be conducted as soon as possible within the Committee as well as among regional groups, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution, with a view to reaching a positive and final decision on the membership of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in the Committee at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly;".

40. There would also be a new paragraph 47 bis, which would read:

> "*Requests* the Committee to consider ways to improve participation by Member States and entities with observer status in its work with a view to agreeing on specific recommendations in that regard at its forty-eighth session;".

41. Finally, paragraph 48 reflected the two recommendations of COPUOS concerning the granting of permanent observer status in COPUOS.

42. **The Chairman** said that the draft resolution was not anticipated to have any programme budget implications.

43. *Draft resolution A/C.4/58/L.7, as orally revised, was adopted.*

44. **Mr. González Aninat** (Chile) expressed dissatisfaction that his delegation's proposal to take note with satisfaction of a broadly attended recent conference — as was customary in draft resolutions — had been amended by certain delegations, even though it would in no way have affected the substance of the draft resolution just adopted and would have been a matter of minimal courtesy to his Government.

45. **Ms. Anguiano** (Mexico) said that, even though hers was not the only delegation the representative of Chile had in mind, she had taken note of his dissatisfaction and would convey it to her own Government.

Draft resolution A/C.4/58/L.8: Review of the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

46. **Mr. González Aninat** (Chile) introduced draft resolution A/C.4/58/L.8, which highlighted some of the organizational aspects which would facilitate the preparations for the review. Paragraph 4 should be revised by inserting, at the end, the phrase "or at the highest level possible".

47. **The Chairman** said that the draft resolution, was not anticipated to have programme budget implications.

48. *Draft resolution A/C.4/58/L.8, as orally revised, was adopted.*

Agenda item 84: Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

49. **Mr. Maitland** (South Africa) observed that the Committee's forthcoming consideration of the item would coincide with that of a similar item by the Third Committee, which had invited the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 to address it on the item. Although there was no precedent for interaction between two Main Committees, he proposed that the Fourth Committee should also invite the Special Rapporteur to speak to it, or else hold a joint meeting with the Third Committee when he addressed it. His delegation believed that such an encounter would enrich the Fourth Committee's discussions and any resolution it adopted under the item in question.

50. **Mr. Assaf** (Lebanon) said that he supported the South African proposal. The Special Rapporteur's presence in the Fourth Committee would be constructive. He proposed that the Bureau should study the matter and decide on the best possible date.

51. **Ms. Price** (Canada) proposed that the Bureau, in considering the South African proposal, should coordinate with the Chairman of the Third Committee so that the two Committees did not consider the related items simultaneously. That would allow those Fourth Committee delegations interested in hearing the

Special Rapporteur's report to the Third Committee to attend that presentation.

52. **Mr. Keiswetter** (United States of America) observed that the United States had had problems with the Third Committee's invitation to the Special Rapporteur, and he suspected that it would object in the Fourth Committee as well. He urged the Bureau to give careful consideration to the matter.

53. **Mr. Blazey** (Australia), supporting the comments of Canada and the United States, asked whether two meetings with the Special Rapporteur were really necessary. Covering the matter in one Committee only should be adequate.

54. **Mr. Hassan** (Jordan) said that the Bureau should give due respect to the views just expressed but also to the relevant, constructive proposal made by South Africa, which his delegation supported.

55. **Ms. Baaziz** (Algeria), **Mr. Fallouh** (Syrian Arab Republic), **Mr. Al-Malki** (Saudi Arabia), **Mr. Yahya** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), **Mr. Molla Hossein** (Islamic Republic of Iran), **Mr. Ramli** (Malaysia), **Mr. Al-Sharafi** (Yemen) and **Mr. Sow** (Senegal) said that they supported the South African proposal.

56. **Mr. Awad** (Egypt) said that the aim of the South African proposal was to revitalize the work of the Committee. For a long time, it had been the practice of Committee members simply to read their statements on the traditional items. The recent dialogue with the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations under agenda item 85 had afforded his delegation one of the most stimulating meetings it had ever attended in the Committee. Similarly, a serious and balanced dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on a question that fell within the Committee's mandate should be of great benefit.

57. **Ms. Offir-Froim** (Israel) observed that the South African proposal would have a negative impact on the work of the Committee.

58. The **Chairman** said that the Bureau would conduct informal consultations on the South African proposal before reporting back to the Committee.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.